(FHRAI) magazine and newsletter of March, 2000, average occupancy in Indian hotels has declined during the last three years.

(b) This is due to decline in business tourist traffic, devaluation of currency of Far East Asian Countries making them cheaper destinations, shifting of CIS business to China, Bangkok, etc.

(c) to (e) The Government has accepted the recommendations of Disinvestment Commission in regard to disinvestment in ITDC. So far hotel operations of ITDC are concerned, the main recommendations of the Commission are as under:—

(i) Hotels situated in prime locations like Delhi and Bangalore may be handed over to established hotel chains through a competitive bidding process to be run on a long term structured contract on lease-cum-management basis.

(ii) Other hotels may be de-merged into separate corporate identities and the disinvestment in the new companies will be through sale of 100% Government shareholding in them.

Revitalisation of Hotel Industry

4698. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the performance of the ITDC, from the hotel industry point of view, during the recent years has not been encouraging;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The performance of ITDC hotels has shown a declining trend which is attributed, inter alia, to:—

- Recession in hotel industry.
- Low turn-out of business travellers.
- Currency crises in South-East Asian countries making them cheaper destination.

(c) The measures for improvement include:—

- Aggressive marketing efforts.
- Modernisation/improvement of product.
- Entering into new business of flight/railways/outdoor catering.
- Exercising economy in expenditure.

Task Force on Problem Faced by Foreign Tourists

4699. SHRI KUSHOK THIKSEY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite having rich cultural and geographical heritage the foreign tourists inflow to the country is abysmally low as compared to its neighbour China, which attracts approximately 25 million tourists a year;

(b) whether Government have formed a task force to study the problems and to find out remedial measures; and

(c) if so, what are the contents of the report of the task force?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) The percentage share of tourist arrivals during the year 1999 in India and China when compared to the total foreign tourists movement all over the world is 0.38 and 4.12 respectively.

(b) and (c) Though the Ministry of Tourism has not formed any task force exclusively to study the problem of low share, it is taking all steps to increase the share of India in the world tourist arrivals. Various measures to increase the share of India in the world tourist arrivals include development and improvement of infrastructure facilities, publicity and marketing efforts in the overseas markets, strengthening institutions of human resources development and use of information technology.